

MY WATER APPEARS FOAMY

LIKELY PROBLEM	HEALTH CONCERN?	OTHER CLUES & CONSIDERATIONS	CONFIRM IT	POSSIBLE FIXES	LICENSE REQUIRED FOR FIX?	STATE FUNDS?	MORE INFO
Biofilm from Iron or Sulfur Bacteria. See Iron Bacteria brochure and Sulfur Bacteria brochure	No, iron bacteria live off iron in the water. Both iron and sulfur bacteria are a nuisance, but not a threat to your health, so there is no drinking water standard.	<p>Is there evidence of iron in your water; for example, red stains on fixtures or on laundry?</p> <p>Are odors more noticeable after a period of low water use?</p> <p>There are two types of sulfur bacteria—oxidizing and reducing. Hydrogen sulfide gas (produced by sulfur-reducing bacteria) is highly corrosive and can damage plumbing connections, metal piping and well casing. Some sulfur bacteria form deposits that can clog a well screen and pump piping.</p>	Sulfur bacteria samples are difficult to collect and take a long time to analyze. If you suspect either iron or sulfur bacteria request a test for iron bacteria. There is no certification for iron bacteria, but laboratories certified to test for coliform bacteria may offer the test.	Flush system and use more water (iron bacteria)	No	No	Bacteriological Contamination of Drinking Water Wells brochure University of Wisconsin Extension National Ground Water Association Water Systems Council National Sanitation Foundation
				Periodic shock chlorination (both iron and sulfur bacteria)	No, but licensed Well Drillers or Pump Installers have the knowledge and equipment.	No	
				Increase water heater temperature temporarily and drain tank (sulfur bacteria)	No, but do not attempt unless water heater has a pressure relief valve.	No	
				Well cleaning (iron bacteria)	No, but licensed Well Drillers or Pump Installers have the knowledge and equipment.	No	
				Continuous pellet chlorination	Licensed Pump Installers or well owners must install. DNR recommends that license holders install.	No	
				Replace magnesium anode rods if the problem appears to be only with the hot water	No, but recommend hiring a licensed plumber.	No	

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POSSIBLE PROBLEM	HEALTH CONCERN?	OTHER CLUES & CONSIDERATIONS	CONFIRM IT	POSSIBLE FIXES	LICENSE REQUIRED FOR FIX?	STATE FUNDS?	MORE INFO
Detergent entering the groundwater	Yes, if other contaminants are associated with the detergent.	Are you discharging laundry water directly on the ground or to a drain without running it through the onsite waste system?	Have your water tested for chloride, nitrate and coliform bacteria. Contact a laboratory certified to test for chloride and nitrate . Contact a laboratory certified to test for coliform bacteria .	Stop discharging laundry water to the ground.	Licensed plumbers are recommended for plumbing piping fixes; though in some cases this work can be done by the owner/occupant of a single family private residence. See plumbing license laws .	No	Bacteriological Contamination of Drinking Water brochure University of Wisconsin Extension
		Is your onsite waste system operating properly?		Have your onsite waste system checked by an inspector	Licensed plumbers are recommended.	No	National Ground Water Association Water Systems Council
		Is your well installed far enough away from potential contamination sources?		Well inspection and upgrade	No license is required for an inspection <i>unless</i> it is performed at time of property transfer; although Well Drillers or Pump Installers are the most qualified. Only well drillers may modify a well. Only pump installers may modify a pump installation.	No	National Sanitation Foundation
		Does the well casing pipe depth meet code minimum?					

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Tannins (chemicals released from decaying plants) Iron can sometimes be associated with tannins. See Iron in Drinking Water brochure.	No	Is your well shallow? Is your property located close to a swamp, bog, wetland, lake or river? Slowly run water into a bucket without aerating the water. If the water is brown as it leaves the faucet, then tannins are the likely problem.	Test your water for tannins. Use a laboratory certified by DNR to perform tannin analyses . Test for iron, too, if you are considering treatment as a solution.	Change the well casing pipe depth in your well to obtain water above or below the depth where tannins occur. Consider the geology in the area and talk to a licensed Well Driller or Pump Installer to discuss options.	Yes for drilled wells. Contact a licensed Well Driller for drilled wells. No for driven point wells , although only licensed Pump Installers may install/change a pitless adapter.	No	University of Wisconsin Extension National Ground Water Association Water Systems Council National Sanitation Foundation
				Install Dept. of Commerce approved water treatment device. Devices are listed under contaminants they will remove.	Yes, treatment devices must be installed by licensed plumbers; or in some cases may be installed by the owner/occupant of a single family private residence. See plumbing license laws .		